

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 SAIGON 04945 260553 Z

15

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 OMB-01 AID-20 IO-12 DPW-01 EUR-25

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-09 H-02 INR-09 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10

PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-14 USIA-12 EB-11 RSR-01 /150 W

----- 018450

R 260350 Z MAR 73

FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9177

USDEL FRANCE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAIGON 4945

E. O. 11652 GDS

TAGS: PINT PINS MILI VS

SUBJECT: WEEKLY SITREP - 20 MAR. TO 25 MAR. 1973

FOL TEL SENT ACTION IMMEDIATE SAIGON FROM BIEN HOA DTD MARCH
25, 1973 RPTD TO YOU FOR YOUR INFO

QUOTE C O N F I D E N T I A L BIEN HOA 0035

1. MILITARY DEVELOPMENTS OCCUPIED CENTER STAGE IN MR III THIS
PAST WEEK. THE SIEGE OF RACH BAP OUTPOST (BINH DUONG) WAS
LIFTED, BUT THE VC/ NVA INCREASED PRESSURE IN PHUOC TUY,
INTERDICTING LTL 2 NEAR THE LONG KHANH BORDER WITH 2 BATTALIONS.
A SHARP ENGAGEMENT WAS FOUGHT AT THU THUA (LONG AN) AND THE
VC/ NVA TRIED SEVERAL TIMES TO OVERRUN 260 ARVN RANGERS DEFENDING
THE TONLE CHAM BASE CAMP IN TAY NINH AFTER FIRST LEVELLING EVERY ABOVE
E

GROUND STRUCTURE AT THE CAMP AND DESTROYING THE AMMO DUMP IN AN
INTEN

SE

BOMBARDMENT LASTING SEVERAL DAYS. THE EMBATTLED GARRISON WAS
GRANTED A REPRIEVE AS THE WEEK CAME TO A CLOSE. THE COMMUNISTS
AND RVN FORCES AGREED TO A TEMPORARY TRUCE SO THAT THE WOUNDED
COULD BE EVACUATED AND THE DEAD REMOVED, AND AT THIS WRITING, THE
COMMUNIST BOMBARDMENT HAS NOT RESUMED. INFORMED SOURCES AGREE,
HOWEVER, THAT THIS OUTPOST WOULD HAVE FALLEN TO THE COMMUNISTS
(AND STILL MAY) IF THE SHELLING HAD CONTINUED FOR ANOTHER DAY OR SO.
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 SAIGON 04945 260553 Z

2. THE TONLE CHAM BASE CAMP HAS NOT BEEN SHELLLED SINCE 1300 HOURS ON 23 MARCH ALTHOUGH ENEMY SOLDIERS, SOME WEARING HELMETS, AR
E PLAINLY VISIBLE AND STILL DUG IN 100 METERS FROM THE PERIMETER WIRE. AIRCRAFT OF THE ICCS AND FPJMC WERE ON THE GROUND AT TONLE CHAM AIRSTRIP FOR ABOUT THREE HOURS DURING THE MORNING OF 24 MARCH TO SUPERVISE EVACUATION OF WOUNDED ON BOTH SIDES. 26 ARVN RANGERS FROM THE DEFENDING 92 ND RANGER BN, SOME IN POOR CONDITION, WERE EVACUATED. NEITHER OF THE SUPERVISORY TEAMS WOULD REMAIN IN THE CAMP, DESPITE APPEALS FROM THE COMMANDER, BECUASE RVN/ PRG REPRESENTATIVES COUND NOT GUARANTEE THEIR SAFETY. INTERROGATION OF ARVN WOUNDED HAS IDENTIFIED THE ENEMY FORCE BESEIGING THE CAMP AS THE " BINH GIA GROUP" CONSISTING OF THE 271 ST REGIMENT OF THE 9 TH NVA DIVISION SUPPORTED BY A BATTALION OF THE 69 TH ARTILLERY DIVISION. ELSEWHERE IN MR III, 18 INCIDENTS WERE REPORTED - 7 GROUND ATTACKS AND 11 ABFS. DAILY CASUALTY FIGURES WERE 10 VC/ NVA KILLED, 5 FRIENDLY KILLED AND 21 WOUNDED. ONE VIETNAMESE CIVILIAN WAS KILLED AND ONE WOUNDED DURING A VC INITIATED GROUND ATTACK ON THE 276 TH RF COMPANY IN TAY NINH PROVINCE. QL 14 TO SONG BE HAS BEEN CLOSED TO CIVILIAN TRAFFIC BY THE VC/ NVA.

3. ANOTHER WEEK HAS COME AND GONE AND STILL NO PEACE, NOR ANY SIGN WHICH INDICATES THAT PEACE IS ON THE MINDS OF THE BELLIGERENTS. THE ICCS IS SPLIT DOWN THE MIDDLE AND THE FPJMC, WITH ITS AMERICAN AND RVN MEMBERS IMPATIENTLY AWAITING THE ARRIVAL OF THE PRG/ DRV REPRESENTATION, HAS NOT EVEN HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO AGREE TO DISAGREE WHICH SEEMS TO BE THE MODUS OPERANDI OF THE ICCS. NEITHER PEACEKEEPING UNIT HAS BEEN WILLING (OR PERHAPS ABLE) TO EFFECTIVELY INTERVENE IN THE HEAVY FIGHTING WHICH TOOK PLACE THIS WEEK IN THIS REGION. CANDEL SOURCES BLAME THE POLES, THIS WEEK' S CHAIRMAN, FOR DELIBERATELY DRAGGING THEIR FEET. THE POLES CLAIM THAT TO VISIT PLACES LIKE TONLE CHAM TO INVESTIGATE ALLEGED VIOLATIONS WOULD BE TAKING UNNECESSARY RISKS AS THE PRG CANNOT (OR PERHAPS WOULD NOT) GUARANTEE SAFETY FOR THE ICCS MEMBERS.

4. COMMUNIST AGITPROP ACTIVITES ARE INCREASING AGAINST A SLOWLY INTENSIFYING BACKGROUND OF LOW- LEVEL TERRORISM. COMMUNIST LEAFLETING AND PROSELYTING ARE BECOMING MORE AUDACIOUS.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 SAIGON 04945 260553 Z

5. THE RVN HAS NOT BEEN SO DISTRACTED BY MILITARY DEVELOPMENTS

AS TO LOSE SIGHT OF THE POLITICAL STRUGGLE. III CORPS CG LTG NGUYEN VAN MINH HAS PUT HIS PROVINCE CHIEFS AND THE MAYORS OF SAIGON AND VUNG TAU ON NOTICE THAT MISUSE OR MISAPPROPRIATION OF U. S. AID WILL MEAN ITS TERMINATION AND THE ALIENATION OF THE PEOPLE IN THE COUNTRYSIDE WHOSE SUPPORT IS VITAL TO THE RVN. POLITICAL STRUGGLE COMMITTEES ARE ACTIVE THROUGHOUT MR III IN EXPLAINING AND DEFENDING THE RVN POSITION ON THE PARIS AGREEMENT.

6. RVN OFFICIALS ARE TRYING TO REVIVE AND STIMULATE ECONOMIC ACTIVITY IN MR III, WITHOUT AT THE SAME TIME AIDING THE COMMUNISTS BY ENABLING THEM TO PURCHASE WAR- RELATED COMMODITIES. FOR EXAMPLE, THE REOPENING OF THE PHUOC TAN MARKET (TAY NINH) NEAR THE CAMBODIAN BORDER THIS WEEK WAS ACCOMPANIED BY NEW AND STRICTER CONTROLS ON THE SALE OF POL AND DRUGS. DECISIONS TO RENEW LOGGING OPERATIONS IN CERTAIN AREAS WHERE THE LOGGERS WOULD LIKELY HAVE SUBSTANTIAL CONTACT WITH THE VC/ NVA ARE STILL UNDER REVIEW.
WALKINSHAW UNQUOTE
BUNKER

CONFIDENTIAL

*** Current Handling Restrictions *** n/a

*** Current Classification *** CONFIDENTIAL

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts:
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 26 MAR 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: kelleyw0
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973SAIGON04945
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GDS
Errors: n/a
Film Number: n/a
From: SAIGON
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19730337/aaaaigfm.tel
Line Count: 143
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: kelleyw0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 24 OCT 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <24-Oct-2001 by kelleyw0>; APPROVED <30-Oct-2001 by kelleyw0>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: <DBA CORRECTED> jms 971224
Subject: WEEKLY SITREP - 20 MAR. TO 25 MAR. 1973
TAGS: PINS, MILI, PINT
To: EA
FRANCE
SECSTATE WASHDC
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005